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Introduction

Between the two poles of Massimo D’Azeglio and Primo Levi this volume examines the itinerary of union and disunion between modern Italy and its Jews. On the eve of the Revolution of 1848, D’Azeglio, calling on Pope Pius IX to abolish the Jewish ghetto of Rome and emancipate the Jews, explicitly connected the status of Italian Jewry to the project of Italian unification and nationhood. “The cause of Jewish regeneration,” he declared, was “strictly united with that of Italian Regeneration.” D’Azeglio’s dual campaign on behalf of Italian Jewry and Italian unification stands as the point of departure for this volume, which addresses these and many other questions related to the place of Italian Jewish culture and history in the birth and development of the Italian nation from the nineteenth-century Risorgimento to the present. Did the project of Italian nationhood depend on a symbolic union of Italian Jews, who sought full participation in the new state, with those non-Jewish Italians who viewed the abolition of the ghettos as a *sine qua non* of the “New Italy”? In other words, was modern Italy founded on a true universality, which was only made meaningful by embracing the Jews as the bearers of difference? Or was it founded on difference *and* exclusion? That is, did the New Italy of the Risorgimento and Unification betray itself when it gave way to Fascism, the Lateran Pacts, the Racial Laws and the roundups? Or did the liberal patriotism of the earlier period evolve inexorably into these forms?

Primo Levi’s place in today’s Italy marks the conceptual point of arrival for this volume (even though several essays within it focus on historical and cultural events since his death in 1987). As one of the world’s most influential Holocaust writers, and one the best known of Italian Jews, Levi has exerted a strong influence on how the Holocaust has been understood and remembered in Italy. The inclusion on the national 2010 *maturità* exam of an excerpt from the introduction to his *La ricerca delle radici* — a personal anthology of favorite passages by

favorite authors — suggests that, in contemporary Italian culture, Levi functions not only as an Auschwitz survivor, but also as a unique moral voice and canonical literary figure whose works enrich the national patrimony. The strong embrace of Levi offers some evidence that Italian Jews have successfully reintegrated into the fabric of Italian society in the post-war period.

The essays collected here explore a wide range of topics over nearly two centuries, from the 1840s to the present. Despite this variety, these essays feature multiple points of contact and many shared concerns. Any number of possible itineraries through this anthology thus open themselves up to readers. Certainly, one could usefully read the contributions to this volume by broad chronological period, from the late Risorgimento, to the Unification, to the Liberal state, to Fascism, to the post-War period up the present. The editors have chosen instead to highlight a somewhat different set of intersections by organizing them topically: Jews and the Making of the New Society; Jewish Identity in the New Italy; Jewish Tragedy on the National and International Stage; Jews and Italian Nation-Building; and Italian Memory and the Jews: The Holocaust and Beyond.

The image on the cover of this volume is a night-time photo of the Mole Antonelliana, Turin's most notable landmark and so familiar a national monument that it appears on the Italian version of the two-cent euro coin. This edifice functions as a singular icon that links two key figures in this volume, Massimo D'Azeglio and Primo Levi, within a real and metaphorical geography that is both obvious and hidden. As most inhabitants of Turin but few others know, the Mole Antonelliana was conceived in 1862 as a synagogue, more or less coincident with the birth of Italy itself, when Turin was still the capital city. For its first decade and a half, the unfinished building continued to rise, year-by-year, far beyond its original design and ever closer to the heavens, as though carried aloft by the infinitely expansive ego of its architect, Alessandro Antonelli (1798–1888). The recently emancipated Jewish community had intended it, in a practical sense, as a functioning place of worship, and symbolically as a testament to the new era, the new nation, the end of the ghettos and the dawn of an age of equality, in which even the Jews could take their distinctive place on the urban landscape. Yet it nearly bankrupted its Jewish owners and the city purchased it in 1877 as a future monument to their native son and Italy's first king, Vittorio Emanuele II. Later, it would take on yet another part in the drama of modern Italy as the National Museum of Italian Independence. The Mole Antonelliana found what may be its true calling only relatively recently, when it became the National Museum of the Cinema and thus, as it were, the virtual screen onto which the nation's stories are projected.

While it was still a synagogue, the Mole had paid silent tribute to Roberto D’Azeglio who had led the campaign for the emancipation of Turin’s Jewry in 1847 and 1848, just as his brother Massimo had done on a national scale. A century later Primo Levi would declare that the Jews of Turin regarded the Mole with “ironical and polemical affection.” In short, the Mole had a record of remarkable achievement but had also betrayed its own foundational plans — not unlike the New Italy itself in its relation (although not exclusively so) to Italian Jews.

I. Jews and the Making of the New Society

When Risorgimento patriots envisaged the New Italy in terms of national regeneration, they aimed at nothing less than the creation of a new society. In the years before national unification, the movement for Jewish emancipation arose as both a consequence and a condition of this national project. Italian Jews viewed themselves as having an important stake in this society, as equal members and co-creators, and they constituted its most visible minority. At crucial junctures, modern Italian society would define and understand itself in relation to this Jewish minority. The four essays gathered in the first section focus on moments of self-definition, crisis, and reconciliation in the historical arc of Italian society, from its largely intellectual origins in the Risorgimento to the early twentieth century, the Fascist period, and the 1980s.

Within two years of the election of Pope Pius IX in 1846, restrictions on the press were greatly relaxed, popular national guards (*guardie civiche*) were authorized, and constitutions were promulgated in the Papal States, Naples, Tuscany and Piedmont. Soldiers, militias and volunteers from across the peninsula came together to wage a war of independence in the name of both the pope and the Piedmontese king. As Scott Lerner recounts in “Massimo D’Azeglio and the New Italy in the Jewish Mirror,” this extraordinary — and ephemeral — moment of national unity also propelled campaigns for equal rights for Italy’s Jews, still mostly confined to physical ghettos. Describing the role of the “Jewish mirror” first in authoritarian Christian and then in liberal society, Lerner focuses on the liberal Catholics led by D’Azeglio, who, although with little appreciation for Judaism or belief that it would survive, came to see their vision for a New Italy as inseparable from the principle of Jewish equality. The Jewish cause in 1847–48, Lerner argues, thus became a practical and conceptual laboratory for the development of the founding principles of liberal society in Italy. By design, Lerner’s essay not only advances a specific argument on D’Azeglio’s foundational role

in the creation of modern Italy, but also broadly frames the topic of the entire volume.

Almost immediately following emancipation, Jewish leaders grew concerned that the opportunities to participate fully in society were leading Italian Jews to become distanced from their Jewish communities and from Judaism. By the turn of the century, a few Jews, like Alfonso Pacifici, were denouncing a crisis of assimilation and proposing bold alternatives. In “Liberalism, Zionism, and Fascism: Alfonso Pacifici’s ‘Ebraismo integrale,’” Sara Airoidi explains that Pacifici saw the freedoms of liberalism as the cause of assimilation, even if he acknowledged that liberal reforms had enabled Jews to escape the ghettos. As a means of achieving Jewish renewal combined with Italian patriotism, Pacifici advocated a return to an “illiberal” society in which religious leaders would regain broad powers over their communities. As Airoidi shows, Pacifici, who believed that a right of sovereignty belonged to all religions, would have been pleased to see a Jewish equivalent of the 1929 Concordat between the Church and the Fascist regime. Eventually, however, his admiration for the spiritual idea of the nation that he found in Fascism gave way to a deep concern about its ethno-religious and racist nationalism.

In contrast to Pacifici, who found fault with liberal society because it resulted in the alienation of Jews from Jewishness, Giorgio Bassani’s *Romanzo di Ferrara* — in Emanuel Rota’s reading — paints a picture of the “clamoroso fallimento del tentativo del nazionalismo italiano di creare una casa comune.” In “Parlare del tempo al tempo dell’Olocausto: l’impossibile *Heimat* ferrarese di Giorgio Bassani,” Rota examines the phatic language of everyday conversation, in Bassani’s fiction, as a fundamental component of human sociability. In the right circumstances, according to Rota, the social rituals, mannerisms and banal conversations of phatic language can sustain a community and overcome the wall of otherness among its members. In Bassani’s Ferrara during the years of Nazi collaboration, deportations and their aftermath, however, such social exchanges can mask imminent violence and betrayal. Rota’s reading exposes Bassani’s Ferrara as a community divided by pervasive walls that were only temporarily forgotten in the process of Jewish emancipation that was part of the construction of the modern nation. When society is composed of executioners and victims, Rota concludes, the everyday conversations that can hold a national community together become a “bestemmia.”

The last essay in this group, by Alberto Melloni, focuses instead on an historic act of reconciliation, with profound implications for society, between the Catholic Church and the Jewish community of Rome, which had co-existed

near the banks of the Tiber for two millennia. In “Il discorso di Giovanni Paolo II nel Tempio Maggiore di Roma: redazioni e significati di un testo chiave,” Melloni tells the story of the events leading up to Pope John Paul II’s 1986 visit to the synagogue that stands within the former ghetto. After the war, the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) had taken an unprecedented stride toward the reversal of its portrayal of Jews and Judaism, and twenty years later John Paul II drew on the Council’s authority to emphasize that the Church’s understanding of its relationship to Judaism had radically evolved. Melloni underscores how the pope’s language revealed that the theology of supersessionism, which the Church historically applied in relation to Judaism, had finally been overturned. The original version of the speech, Melloni points out, contained a stronger self-accusation on behalf of the Church, whereas the final version more emphatically condemned antisemitism by *anyone*—implicitly including “il papa del caso Mortara e il papa del caso Zolli”: Popes Pius IX and Pius XII.

II. Jewish Identity in the New Italy

To be Jewish in old-regime European societies had social and legal implications that extended well beyond the sphere of religious beliefs. A Jew necessarily belonged to a corporate body—a historic *nazione ebrea* or a *università israelitica*—that brought access to legal privileges, including the possibility of residing and working within the territory controlled by a sovereign ruler. Such privileges also came with constraints, regarding place of residence, marriage, occupation, clothing, schooling, travel, and social interactions outside the Jewish community. To provide for their indigent and care for their ill, Jews ran their own charitable organizations; in the event of a conflict with a non-Jew, the community represented its individuals. As a general rule, it was impossible to live in society without doing so either as a Christian or as a Jew. Once Jews became the recipients of equal civil rights, however, their relationship with the state and with society ceased to depend on their condition of being Jewish. Within a Christian-majority society the new freedom that they had thus attained as individuals presented a significant challenge for their collective identity as Jews. At a time, moreover, when most Jews, like many Italians, so strongly identified with the new state that they cultivated a religion of the *patria*, the kind of attachment that they would maintain to their Jewish community became an open question. The four essays gathered in this section address this modern question of Jewish identity.

Francesco Spagnolo shows how the post-emancipation “soundscape” became a medium through which Italian Jews could engage with the broader culture and also ensure continuity between the Jewish past and present. His essay on “Sounds of Emancipation: Politics, Identity and Music in 19th-century Italian Synagogues” traces a previously unidentified oral recording produced by a Jewish cantor from Casale Monferrato in 1954 back to its origin as an occasional composition intended to commemorate the emancipation of the Jews of Piedmont in 1848. Compositions like this one contributed to a new genre called *musica sacra*, in which Jews and Christians could come together within the walls of the hundred or so Italian synagogues of the era. Through comparative analyses of both text and music — poetic meter, and melodic and rhythmic patterns — Spagnolo reveals that the author-composer created a profoundly Jewish work, rooted in Jewish sources (the Bible) and current events (emancipation), while also finding inspiration in Italian culture and correspondences with Manzoni’s tragedy *Il conte di Carmagnola*, Solera and Verdi’s opera *Nabucco*, and Mameli’s national hymn *Fratelli d’Italia*.

In addition to creating a new musical genre, Italian Jews in the “età dell’integrazione” — from the 1840s to the end of the Liberal period — also developed a new type of fiction writing as a way of reinforcing both a Jewish and an Italian identity. As Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti shows in “Sperimentazione e normatività: periodici ebraici italiani e letteratura fra Otto e Novecento,” author-rabbis took up their pens as short story writers in order to help Italian Jewry navigate the transition to modern society. The aims of these works, according to Ferrara degli Uberti, were both normative and apologetic; that is, they were intended to help guide Jewish readers on issues like marriage, love and intergenerational change, while also representing Italian Jewish life in a positive light, overturning the negative portrayals that had been rampant in non-Jewish popular culture. Despite their unexceptional literary quality, these stories constituted an important experimental laboratory for Jewish identity.

From the institutional center of Jewish identity, in synagogue music and Jewish periodical literature, Gabriella Romani shifts the focus to the “position of social liminality” occupied by Erminia Fuà Fusinato, the first Jewish woman to hold an official government appointment in unified Italy. In “Erminia Fuà Fusinato: A Jewish Patriot in Rome (1871–76),” Romani paints a portrait of her subject — a Risorgimento poet and inspector of schools — that contrasts with extant scholarship by drawing attention to Fuà Fusinato’s Jewish origin and Jewish identity. Unlike most of her peers, Fuà Fusinato wanted to marry out of love; the only way she could do so, before emancipation, was by converting to

Catholicism. Romani argues that Fuà Fusinato never truly embraced her new religion, however, and may have maintained a Jewish identity that she felt obligated to conceal in her poetry and public life. Her story, with the complex questions of identity that it presents, is exemplary of the “multiple routes” Italian Jews took in their journey “out of the ghetto.”

The last of the essays in this group, by Alberto Cavaglion, shifts the perspective once more by offering a broad canvas of Italian-Jewish writers between Unification and the Second World War through a very particular — and highly original — lens, that of their identificatory attachment to the Italian landscape. The landscapes to which Cavaglion refers, in “Ebraismo e patriottismo del paesaggio,” may belong to the natural world, but they may also be products of human society: “uno scoglio, un vicolo, una bottega, le tende di un mercato.” Instead of engaging with the politics and “principi essenziali della società liberale,” Jews of the Liberal period, Cavaglion argues, chose to adapt themselves to the surrounding landscape, “calandosi in una nuova realtà.” This sort of patriotism, perhaps unavoidably naive, left them ill-prepared for the tragedies of history that would follow. Cavaglion then turns to Giorgio Bassani’s novel *Il giardino dei Finzi-Contini* as an illustration of how, for a later generation, all that remained of this love for Italy were the images of a family mausoleum, dust-covered family documents, and buried memories.

III. Jewish Tragedy on the National and International Stage

The path toward Italian unification depended on few single events as much as on the meeting in July 1858 between the French Emperor Napoleon III and the Prime Minister of Piedmont-Sardinia, Count Cavour. That encounter resulted in a secret plan to force Austria out of Italy and to annex three-quarters of the Papal States to the Kingdom of Sardinia, soon to be the Kingdom of Italy. A likely key factor in impelling the French emperor to assume this role in the expansion of Piedmont — and Italy — at the expense of the temporal power of the pope was the attitude of the Pius IX in the *caso Mortara*. Just a month earlier, papal authorities had forcibly removed six-year-old Edgardo Mortara from his Jewish family after learning that a Christian household servant had secretly baptized him. Rather than granting any of the petitions to release the boy, Pius IX protected him personally and regarded the salvation of his soul as the sacred duty of the Church, whatever the cost. The Mortara family’s tragedy, and the international outrage it provoked, placed the question of Christian-Jewish relations and the status of Italy’s unemancipated Jews (outside the Kingdom of Sardinia, where

they obtained emancipation in 1848) on an unprecedented stage of public attention. Building on the landmark study by David Kertzer, the first of this section's essays sheds new light on the Mortara affair by examining the contrasting reactions of Italian Jewish communities. A second essay looks at the representation of this international *cause célèbre* in the American press and as source material for a politically engaged theatrical staging of the story in Italy in 1871. In the final essay the perspective shifts to a second tragic stage and the representation of Jews in post-Holocaust Italian opera.

In "Cronache e *performances*, 1858–1860: il caso Mortara nei diari e documenti ebraico-italiani dell'epoca," Elèna Mortara brings renewed attention to a variety of Italian-Jewish responses to the Mortara affair. These range from reports held in the archive of the Jewish community of Rome to unpublished private diaries and letters written by important members of that community, to contemporary articles that appeared in the Piedmont-based newspaper *L'educatore israelita*. While some of the private documents from Rome record quiet efforts to persuade the Vatican to release the child to his family, other documents testify to a clamorous outpouring of recrimination from many quarters in northern Italy and abroad against the child's kidnappers. What emerges from Elèna Mortara's analysis is that Italy became a kind of theatrical stage where domestic and international entities "performed" their political positions publicly. Moreover, the fight to defend the violated rights of the Mortara family became intertwined with the larger aims of the Risorgimento, as exemplified by the fundamental principle that people of all faiths must be accorded equal rights.

Michael Sherberg's "*Habeas corpus*: American and Italian Responses to the Mortara Affair" recounts *The New York Times's* thorough reporting on the affair, and, on the newspaper's opinion pages, the moral opprobrium it directed toward the Vatican. This trans-Atlantic coverage testifies to the global impact of the scandal. Understanding the case as a dispute between paternal rights and the authoritarian power exercised by the Papal States, the *Times* seemed to endorse implicitly the unification of Italy under a secular government. A different kind of contemporary response was offered by Riccardo Castelvechio's *La famiglia ebrea*, an 1871 play based loosely on the Mortara affair, but now explicitly linked to Risorgimento politics. In Castelvechio's telling, the abducted child's father is a rabbi and an active supporter of the movement to unify Italy. Drawing on Biblical references, the play employs the Exodus story to link the liberation of one Jewish family with the liberation of all Italian families, who will eventually live together in harmony in a secular state.

In “Guilt and Operatic Atonement in Post-Holocaust Italy,” Jesse Rosenberg closely analyzes three Italian operas composed in the aftermath of the Holocaust that focus on Jewish themes and characters, and on antisemitism old and new. In the definitive 1966 version of *Il mercante di Venezia* (1961), Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco recasts Shylock as a tragic hero by concluding his opera with Shylock’s defeat, instead of with the happy lovers’ scene that ends Shakespeare’s play. In this way, Rosenberg argues, Castelnuovo-Tedesco — a Jew forced into exile by the Fascist-era Racial Laws — took his defiant artistic revenge by presenting Italian audiences with a tragic opera about a reviled Italian Jew, and by pointedly rejecting Shakespeare’s happy ending. Rosenberg then turns to Franco Mannino’s *La speranza* (1970), an opera set during World War II and based on an incident from the composer’s life, in which a Jewish friend committed suicide in response to the oppressive restrictions of the Racial Laws. Finally, in Sandro Fuga’s *Confessione*, which premiered in 1971, a partisan fighter condemned to execution by the Nazis makes his “confession” to his Jewish comrade, who has entered the prison disguised as a priest. Rosenberg contends that the opera dramatizes, in words and music, the religious affinity that unites the two comrades, despite their cultural differences.

IV. Jews and Italian Nation-Building

The four wide-ranging articles clustered in part IV address questions that are crucial to the intellectual aims of this volume. How did Italian Jews understand their role in the creation of modern Italy? Was the embrace of the secular state and democracy consistent with the aims of Judaism or detrimental to them, especially with the rise of Zionism? At the same time, how did powerful social and political institutions, specifically the Savoy monarchy and the Fascist regime, understand the role of Jews in building and developing modern Italy?

Alessandro Grazi, in “Divergent Jewish Approaches to Italian Nationalism and Nation-Building,” compares the life and writings of two prominent intellectuals at work during the Risorgimento and its aftermath to characterize two contrasting versions of Jewish Italian nationalism inflected by regional differences. David Levi (1816–1898), living in Piedmont, fully embraced the Risorgimento on which the emancipation of Italy’s Jews depended. He believed that Enlightenment values harmonized perfectly with Judaism, understood as a set of universal principles — God, the Law and the People — that had been rediscovered by proponents of the French Revolution. Rabbi Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865), living in relative freedom under Habsburg rule in Padua, was also

a proud Italian and supporter of the Risorgimento. However, he believed that civic emancipation was not urgent and feared that it would weaken his compatriots' Jewish identity by reducing it to a purely private religious sphere. The fundamental distinction between these two representative figures, Grazi concludes, is that the Risorgimento and emancipation necessarily coincided for Levi, whereas Luzzatto conceived of them as separate questions.

Matteo Perissinotto discusses the complex relationship between Jewish identity and Italian patriotism during the First World War in "Il difficile equilibrio tra identità ebraica e patriottismo durante la Grande Guerra." To show that there was no single Italian Jewish response to the conflict, Perissinotto draws on an array of primary sources to track the evolving views of the different groups within the Jewish community. The perspectives he illustrates range from the rabbinic establishment to the new Comitato delle Comunità Israelitiche Italiane, and from the Zionists, with their internationalist-socialist perspective, to the secular assimilationists. Sensitive to accusations of insufficient patriotism and "double loyalty" — that is, to both Italy and to a hoped-for Jewish state — Italian Jews who supported the war argued that sending Jewish soldiers to fight under Italy's flag constituted the final stage of Jewish emancipation and the ultimate fruition of the Risorgimento.

Paolo Pellegrini contends, in "Jews Ennobled by the Savoys: The Role and Relationships of a Minority in Unified Italy," that patents of nobility served as a reward to Italian Jews who played prominent roles in building the new state, and in consolidating it both domestically and internationally. Furthermore, the entry of Jews into unified Italy's upper social echelons advanced the secularization of society and demonstrated the new Liberal state's commitment to equal rights and tolerance of difference. Bringing a comparative perspective to his research, Pellegrini finds that, especially in the Liberal period (1861–1922), the Royal House of Savoy granted more hereditary honors to its Jewish subjects than other European monarchs. However, the situation changed radically during the rise of Fascism and the subsequent dismantling of the Liberal state with the endorsement of Vittorio Emanuele III.

In "Nation-Building through Antisemitism: Fascism and the Jew as the Internal Enemy," Ernest Ialongo shows that the Fascist regime's late turn to anti-semitic policies was largely motivated by instrumental, political purposes rather than authentic, culturally rooted ones. The Regime rallied the nation against a convenient internal enemy, the Jews, to try to bolster the Italians' weak national consciousness. Ialongo further demonstrates that scapegoating minorities for the sake of nation-building and the consolidation of political power was a routine

practice since Italy's 1861 unification. In fact, Mussolini's anti-Jewish policies were comparable to the Liberal government's assault on southern Italian rebels in the 1860s, anarchists in the 1870s, and Sicilian rebels and the radical left in the 1890s. While Mussolini's anti-Jewish policies shocked assimilated Italian Jews to be labeled as outcasts who could never be true Italians, other political and ethnic minorities, likewise labeled different and dangerous, had already suffered similar ostracisms in the furtherance of political aims.

V. Italian Memory and the Jews: The Holocaust and Beyond

The four articles in part V are studies of Holocaust memory and forgetting, in Italy and beyond, from the perspective of the victims, but also in the service of evolving national narratives. For decades, Italians generally disavowed Italy's culpability for the persecution and deportation of its Jewish citizens, laying blame on a small number of Fascists and on the Nazis, who occupied Italy after the collapse of the Fascist regime. However, by the early 2000s, Italians generally embraced the nation's complicity in the Holocaust and commemorated its tragic events. More recently, as Holocaust memory has become institutionalized, some Jews have sought to move beyond their victim status by recovering the positive legacy of Italian Jewish heritage and history.

Gabriele Boccaccini sheds new light on the story of a child survivor of the Holocaust who seemed to have mysteriously disappeared after the war in "Luigi Ferri: il bambino scomparso di Auschwitz." Through a careful analysis of numerous unpublished documents, Boccaccini shows that Ferri's "disappearance" — actually, his self-imposed silence — resulted from a progressive alienation from his Jewish identity, which began under Fascism and continued during his imprisonment in Auschwitz. Boccaccini's account illustrates the vagaries of Nazi and Fascist racial laws, which determined who was Jewish in arbitrary ways. Ferri had a Jewish father and a Catholic mother, who saw to his baptism by the Church, which made him an "Aryan" under Fascist law. However, once he arrived at Auschwitz, Ferri had further incentive to detach himself completely from his Jewish parentage and to hide his identity. Under Nazi law, Ferri was a *Mischling* and would have been subject to extermination had he not passed as a Gentile. It is in this way, Boccaccini argues, that Luigi Ferri "disappears": the child survives Auschwitz with a new identity that completely erases his ties to his Jewish past. With this essay, Boccaccini recovers the complex case of this once-famous survivor for our collective memory.

In “Primo Levi’s Editions of *Se questo è un uomo* and the Evolution of Italian Holocaust Memory, 1947–1958,” Jonathan Druker contends that the definitive 1958 edition of Levi’s canonical memoir differs significantly from the 1947 edition. While the first edition focuses almost exclusively on documenting Nazi crimes against humanity, the second edition incorporates more remembrances of individual victims and scenes of altruistic friendship, as well as more autobiographical elements. Taken together, these revisions indicate Levi’s shift in self-perception from “witness” to “author.” Druker links Levi’s impetus for adding the new material to the evolution of Holocaust memory in Italy in the first dozen years after the war, and, especially, to commemorations related to the tenth anniversary of the defeat of Fascism in 1955. Druker concludes that the added passages introduce notes of optimism that affect how Levi’s testimony has been interpreted. The impact of these changes is worth registering because *Se questo è un uomo* has exerted such a strong influence on how the Holocaust has been remembered and understood in Italy.

Alexis Herr undertakes a “microhistory” of the postwar uses of Fossoli, the Italian-German concentration camp from which about 3,000 Jews were deported in 1944. Until 1970, Fossoli served variously as a refugee camp, a home for war orphans, and a temporary refuge for ethnic Italians exiled from Istria and Dalmatia. In “Fossoli di Carpi and the Many Faces of Holocaust Memory in Postwar Italy,” Herr argues that these benevolent uses of Fossoli, and its later dilapidated state, overwrote the tragic history of the site, fostering instead the myth of *Italiani, brava gente*. For almost six decades, this specious concept for describing Italian national character in overly positive terms occupied the symbolic and literal spaces where the memory of Italy’s role in the Holocaust should have resided. More recently, significant memorials to the victims of Fossoli have been constructed. While two of these well-intentioned efforts fail to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish deportees who sojourned in the camp, the restoration of a former Fossoli barrack in 2001, and the exhibit it holds, begin to address this complex history, including the facts about Italian complicity in the Holocaust.

Marco Di Giulio compares two ongoing projects designed to promote Jewish history and culture in Italy in “Negotiations of Jewish Memory: Rome’s Holocaust Museum and the *Progetto Traduzione Talmud Babilonese*.” He gives a thorough account of the so-far unsuccessful attempt, over the course of fifteen years, to build a national Holocaust museum in Rome. A divisive concept even within the Jewish community itself, the museum project continues to be stymied by local and national political fractures. Meanwhile, a more successful ongoing

project, organized by the Jewish community of Rome and well supported by the Italian state, is the page-by-page effort to translate the massive Babylonian Talmud into Italian for the first time. Di Giulio argues that the Jewish community strongly backs the Talmud translation project because it promises to regenerate Italian Jewry's cultural, intellectual, and religious heritage, thus offering a positive expression of Jewish identity to counterbalance the negative representations of Jews as passive victims that inevitably arise in the context of Holocaust commemorations.

Di Giulio's article serves as a fitting conclusion to this volume, which begins with Massimo D'Azeglio's assertion in 1848 that the "regeneration" of Italy's Jews and the regeneration of the entire nation are linked. After all, translating the Babylonian Talmud into Italian not only renews Italian Jewish heritage, but it also places a touchstone of universal knowledge on the shelf holding Italy's precious national literature, alongside Dante and Primo Levi.

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